

Life of the Spirit

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CHRISTIAN LIFE

BY

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CHRISTIAN life is a life of friendship with God, 'I have called you friends' (John 15, 5). More, we are called to share the divine life itself in fellowship with Christ and as members of God's family; 'God is faithful, by whom you are called unto the fellowship of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord' (1 Cor. 1, 9). He is our elder brother, 'the firstborn among many brethren' (Rom. 8, 29); we receive the spirit of adoption of sons, and are joint heirs with Christ (Rom. 8, 15-7).

The fullness of the divine life is to be ours hereafter in the blessed, all-satisfying vision and love of God eternally possessed. Then 'we shall be like to him, because we shall see him as he is' (1 John 3, 2); we shall see face to face, and know even as we are known (1 Cor. 13, 12). This life of eternal blessedness is indeed promised as a reward for a life well lived here below, but it will be only the full development of the divine life already begun in this world. 'He that believeth in the son *hath* eternal life' (John 3, 36); we are *now* the sons of God' (1 John 3, 2). At baptism the soul is born again to the higher life by adoptive sonship, and by this higher life, which we are accustomed to call sanctifying grace, we are 'partakers of the divine nature' (2 Pet. 1, 4).

We know of the existence of this grace only from revelation. In this world we have no direct and clear knowledge of purely spiritual realities, and we can express them to ourselves only by comparisons and analogies. A comparison helps us partially to grasp the nature of grace. It is beyond the natural capacity of an animal to reason, or that of a plant to see, walk, enjoy or suffer. In a similar way it surpasses the natural power of any created being to see God as he is, sharing the life of happiness which of right belongs only to the three Persons of the Blessed Trinity. Because this is the inheritance which is to be ours, God makes it possible by raising us to the supernatural and divine life in the rebirth of baptism. But whereas an irrational animal could not produce the

works of intelligence without changing its nature and ceasing to be what it was, our rebirth implies only an accidental transformation, so that the soul becomes a deified soul, and yet remains a human soul. We do not become identical with God, but the very nature of God is imparted to us in a mysterious way by means of a created quality in the soul; it is a true sharing by likeness. We have it as part of ourselves, as that by means of which we are made capable of living the life which God lives. 'O Christian, acknowledge thy dignity, and as thou hast received a share in the divine nature, do not by unworthy conduct return to thy former baseness.'¹ 'The value of the divine grace in a single individual', says St Thomas Aquinas, 'is greater than the natural goodness of the whole universe.'²

Because God is a spirit, his interior life consists of the activity of knowledge and of will, knowledge of the supreme Truth, and love of the supreme Goodness. His knowledge extends to all things, for he is the cause of all, and his love extends to all created beings, for each in its own far-off way mirrors the divine goodness. The soul transformed by sanctifying grace is at root capable of sharing in this same knowledge and love. In this world we have only the less perfect knowledge of God which faith gives. We do not see him, but we know about him. We know the truths concerning his inner life and his intentions in our regard which he has made known. Even while he is known to us only from afar we understand sufficiently to hope for the possession of him who is our supreme good, and to love him who in himself and for his own sake is infinitely lovable. Hereafter faith will give place to clear vision, and hope to fulfilment; charity alone 'never falleth away' (1 Cor. 13, 8). It is in the exercise of these three theological virtues that we make our own the divine acts by which God himself lives, so far as it is possible for us to do so here below.

But man cannot successfully live a dual life. Body and soul form a natural unity, and even on the natural plane his lower activities, with the exception of those which are purely organic, are subject to the control of reason and will. When they are so governed they become reasonable activities, and man's life is unified³. In a way which may be compared with this, all man's actions can share the

¹ St Leo the Great, *Serm. I de Nat. Dom.*—Breviary lesson for Christmas Day.

² *Summa* I-II, 113, 9, *ad* 2. On these words Cajetan comments: 'Hold always before your eyes by day and by night that the value of the divine grace in a single individual is greater than the natural goodness of the whole universe, in order that you may continually be aware of the damnation which threatens those who do not appreciate so great a gift'.

³ 'Since reason is the root of human goodness, this goodness will be the more perfect the wider the grounds of action proper to man are subject to reason' (I-II, 24, 3).

divine life of the deified soul. The Christian must govern his whole life in the light of the divine truths which he believes, and under the inspiration of the charity by which he loves God above all things. In the natural sphere his actions are made to share the life of reason easily and with economy of effort by means of the moral virtues, which are habits acquired by practice. Unlike the animals, which act by instinct, man performs his infinitely more varied actions easily and accurately only as the fruit of repeated effort; practice makes perfect in the physical, intellectual and moral spheres. In outward conduct or interior activity, frequent repetition of acts governed by reason gives rise to the habits of so acting which we call the natural moral virtues. On the supernatural plane where man's acts must be governed, not by reason alone, but by reason illumined by the truths of faith, there are corresponding moral virtues. These virtues are more than habits which give a certain facility, they make possible for the first time deified activity in their particular sphere. They cannot be acquired directly by human effort any more than sanctifying grace can be. Grace divinises the soul itself, but the supernatural virtues, which are properties of grace and are received with it at baptism, deify the faculties, the immediate principles by which we act. Nevertheless they are perfectly adapted to our human manner of action, and we cannot practise them without effort, aided by God's actual grace. Indeed more exertion may be necessary than is required to practise the natural moral virtues we already possess. Impediments from our lower selves and from our acquired dispositions and propensities are overcome in the effort to form the natural virtues,⁴ but if we have made no effort to acquire even the natural virtues these impediments will remain to be overcome before we can practise the supernatural virtues with ease.

As is the case with their natural counterparts, there are four principal supernatural virtues, the cardinal virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. All the others are connected with one or another of these four. Intellect and will already share the divine life by the theological virtues, but we do not occupy these powers exclusively with God. The activities of mind by which we direct our practical conduct are divinised by supernatural prudence. Supernatural justice and its connected virtues deify our acts of will in our relations with others. It is true that these acts must also be divinised by charity. We must love God, and we cannot truly do so unless for his sake we love also those whom he loves. But we have relationships with the world external to ourselves which are

⁴ Cf. St Thomas, *De Veritate* 1, 10 ad 14.

even more fundamental, and without justice charity can have no place. We must be just towards God himself, paying him the homage of reverence and submission to his Majesty and Sovereignty in which worship consists. The passions and emotions of our lower being are controlled and supernaturalised by fortitude and temperance with the virtues allied to them. It is by these moral virtues, themselves governed by faith and inspired by charity, that our human activity—reason, sense, and exterior life—shares the life of God. This deification is necessary not only as an extension to the whole man of the divine life of the theological virtues, but for another important reason. On the natural plane the interests of the different parts of our very being are not identical, and if the lower activities are not brought under the control of intellect and will, they develop at the expense of the higher rational life. In the supernatural sphere it is not otherwise, and if the activities natural to man are not supernaturalised, he runs the grave risk of losing the divine life altogether. The more is that so because by the first sin man lost the special gift of God by which human nature was brought into complete harmony, the lower part being made perfectly subject to the higher, as the higher rational soul itself was made perfectly subject to God by grace.

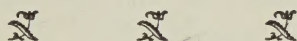
But in living the divine life, the principles of which we can but imperfectly grasp in this world, we are in a position not unlike that of a man not yet fully qualified in his chosen profession. Such a man will make many mistakes unless he is constantly helped by one who is fully qualified⁵. We need 'those secret warnings and invitations, which from time to time are excited in our minds and hearts by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost. Without these there is no beginning a good life, no progress, no arriving at eternal salvation'⁶. The soul is made habitually docile to these inspirations by the sevenfold Gifts of the Holy Spirit which are received at baptism with sanctifying grace and the virtues. The Gifts are permanent, habitual dispositions of mind and will which enable us easily and readily, and as it were naturally, to respond to the passing, transitory helps of the Holy Spirit who dwells within the soul in a state of grace. These suggestions, illuminations of mind and inspirations of will, are given that the soul may overcome special difficulties and temptations or as a mark of special love. In the practice of the theological and moral virtues, which supposes the ordinary divine assistance of actual grace, we live the divine life in a way which is perfectly adapted to our human way of acting by delibera-

⁵ St Thomas, *Summa* I-II, 68, 2.

⁶ Leo XIII, Encyclical *Divinum illud*, 9/5/1897.

tion and choice. But there are occasions when we experience sudden inspirations to avoid sin or to practise virtue which are not the result of previous deliberation. It is in this way that the Holy Spirit takes the initiative, although even by subsequent reflection the sudden inspirations cannot be known with certainty to be his 'secret warnings and invitations'. If it is not possible to begin a good life without his help, it is much less possible to reach any high degree of sanctity without the assistance of the Holy Spirit. Prayer in its higher forms is an activity of the mind under his illuminating movement. Under his direction we are in the first instance passive, instruments; but we are responsible human instruments, capable of responding freely to his guidance in the path which faith marks out.

As God sees the Christian soul, it is transformed both in itself and in its powers of acting. We do not know the spiritual and the supernatural directly, and only from the truths which God has revealed are we aware of this change. Without a special revelation we cannot know with absolute certainty that we ourselves are in a state of grace⁷. A good conscience, and the desire and intention to love God and to avoid sin, give us a practical assurance sufficient for peace of soul that it is so. The same is true of the virtues. The domain of the natural and supernatural virtues is the same. We are in part aware that our actions are supernaturally virtuous because of the higher supernatural motives which inspire them.



FROM ST THOMAS'S COMMENTARY ON THE GOSPEL OF ST JOHN

Jesus saith to her: Do not touch me: for I am not yet ascended to my Father. But go to my brethren and say to them: I ascend to my Father and to your Father, to my God and to your God.

(John 20, 17.)

6 **J**ESUS saith to her: 'Do not touch me.' The Evangelist is here describing how our Lord gives Mary two commands, the first a prohibition, the second a positive order, when he says 'But go to my brethren'.

Now as to the prohibition, two points should be noted: (1) our Lord gives the command; and (2) he explains the reason.

Although we do not actually read in this Gospel narrative that she wanted to touch him, our Lord certainly forbids Mary by saying 'Touch me not'. From what is written we are to infer, according

⁷ St Thomas, *Summa* I-II, 112, 5.

to Gregory, that Mary had cast herself upon the feet of Christ, and in her intense eagerness would have embraced even the very foot-prints of him whom she had recognised. The reason why our Lord prevented her follows: 'For I have not yet ascended to my Father'.

So it would seem that after the Resurrection our Lord did not wish to be touched by men before his Ascension.

But we read differently in the Gospel of St Luke (24, 39): 'Handle and see for a spirit hath not flesh and bones'. It has been suggested that our Lord was willing to be touched by his disciples but not by the holy women. This, however, is untenable because the last chapter of St Matthew's Gospel describes Magdalene and the other women drawing near to our Lord and clinging to his feet.

From a literal reading of the texts we may gather that St Mary Magdalene saw the Angels twice on this journey. St Matthew (28, 5) and St Mark (16, 5) describe the first encounter, when Magdalene was with the other women and saw an angel sitting upon the stone outside the tomb. St John (20, 12) tells of the second time when Magdalene returned by herself and saw two angels inside the sepulchre. So too passing along the same way she met our Lord twice. Once in the garden she thought he was the gardener. She met him a second time, as she ran with the other women to confirm the faith of the disciples in the Resurrection by telling them all she had seen; and then she and the other holy women drew near and clung to his feet. We find this narrated in St Matthew and St Mark.

But there is also a twofold mystical reason, why our Lord would not have Mary Magdalene touch him. For this woman was a symbol of the Church of the Gentiles, which was to touch Christ by faith only after he had ascended to his Father: 'A congregation of people shall surround thee: for their sakes return thou on high' (Ps. 7, 8). The second reason is because, according to St Augustine, (*I De Trinitate*, 9), touch forms as it were the highest point of knowledge. For when we see a thing we know it in so far as we see it, but by touching it we have complete and perfect knowledge of it. Now St Mary Magdalene already had a certain degree of faith in our Lord. She believed that he was a holy man and even called him Master, but she had not yet come to realise that he was equal to the Father and one with God. And so our Lord said, 'Do not touch me', which means: you must not suppose that what you believe about me is the whole truth, 'For I have not yet ascended to my Father'; because in your inmost heart you do not believe that I am one with him. . . . She learnt to believe this afterwards.

Then our Lord imposes a positive order, saying: 'But go to my brethren', which means the Apostles who are his brethren, since he resembles them in his human nature: 'Wherefore it behoved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren' (Hebrews, 2, 17); and also by adoption through grace whereby the Apostles are the adopted sons of that same Father whose Son Christ is by nature. We should note at this point that a threefold privilege was conferred upon Magdalene: (1) Prophecy, in that she deserved to see angels, for a prophet is an intermediary between angels and mortals; (2) The dignity of the angels, in that she saw Christ upon whom the angels desire to look; (3) The office of an Apostle; yes indeed she was made the Apostle of the Apostles in that she was commissioned to report the Resurrection of our Lord to the disciples. So that just as in the first place a woman pronounced the words of death to man, a woman also should be the first to pronounce the words of life. 'And say to them: I ascend to my Father and your Father', which can be compared with chapter 14, 5: 'I go to him who sent me'. 'He that descended is the same also that ascended above all the heavens' (Ephes. 4, 10).

A SILLY SOUL

This extract comes from a translation of the *Documento Spirituale* which William Flete recorded from St Catherine's life at their meeting, 1376-7. It occurs in the Bodleian MS. 131, fol. 131, after Walter Hilton's translation of William Flete's: *De remediis contra tentationes*. It is an indication of St Catherine's connection with English writers through Flete. The MS. is written by one John Morton and bound into the back is a formal recommendation of John Morton and his wife Juliana to the spiritual help of the Austin friars by Willelmus, provincial of the Order in England, dated York, 1438.—C.K.

A SILLY soul, asked of God, our steadfast Lord, cleanness of soul, and God appeared to her and said, 'If thou wilt have that cleanness that thou asketh, thee behoves be oned to me perfectly that am sovereign cleanness. And that shalt thou be if thou wilt keep three things that I shall say unto thee: The first is if thou put thee and all thine entent of all thy works in me, make me the end, and if thou travail thee aye to have me before the eye of thy soul. The second is if thou forsake utterly thine own will and but take heed of my will that will thy holiness and thy good living, and deem aye that I do nothing nor suffer nothing to be done to thee but for thy good, and if thou take heed of this manner, thou shalt not be heavy, thou shalt not be wrath, but rather [be] holden to him that does thee wrong. The third is if thou deem any gates my servants' works, deem not after thine own doom but after my doom.

THE ART OF LETTING GO

BY

A. G. HERRING



VERY now and then the Church is handed a bouquet, over the fence as it were, by someone outside her fold. Professor Jung has done this and surely we can take it. He tells us that he finds 'frequency of complexes . . . highest among the Jews, Protestants come second and Catholics only third'. But what is even more interesting is the reason for this state of things. This is not found specially in the psychological value of confession but rather in the way in which Catholic belief helps a man through the natural psychological crises of ordinary human life. Indeed the professor seems to show that as christian morals help to keep people out of prisons, so christian dogma is of value in keeping them out of asylums. For the life of man is normally a progress beginning as a child under the care of its parents passing through various stages till he attains to maturity and becomes himself a parent. There is an almost complete reversal of roles, from being the child of its parents to being the parents of a child. And it is not surprising that many people fail to accomplish this progress in a satisfactory way—failure very often being due to a tendency to retain the infantile outlook and attitude when the time for these is past and gone. And we do not here refer to mere boisterousness or skittishness, which are common enough, but to deep-seated attachments and inclinations of which the subject may be quite unconscious. And this kind of adhesion can result in all sorts of mental trouble. One type of fixation is produced when a boy centres himself too much around his mother, and so his whole attitude towards women may be prejudiced. He may for this reason abstain from marriage altogether, or expect a wife to be a second mother. One writer goes so far as to say that most drunkards are men with a pathological mother fixation (J. A. C. Brown). Or, again, the malady known as dementia-praecox, which accounts for one third of our asylum population, is due to severe conflict . . . often arising from taking 'the way of regression, saying in effect "I will be a baby again".' (*Education and Crises*, by Fletcher.) And so we could continue, but it is better to give Professor Jung's view as to how the practice of the Catholic Religion helps to prevent the onset of these mental maladies, by aiding the individual to pass smoothly out of one stage of life on to the next, making it easier

for him to relinquish the past (e.g. infancy) so that he can the more readily lay hold of the new—maturity or parenthood.

We see the father and mother world of childhood is dissolved by a rich system of analogical symbols . . . the Pope as *Pater Patrum* and *Ecclesia Mater* are the parents of a family which includes the whole of Christendom, except such parts of it as protest against this.—*Essays on Contemporary Events* (p. 21).

So it is easier to detach oneself from earthly parents and not to seek undesirable substitutes if one has reliance on God, our Lady and the Church. Moreover one can develop into adult responsibility and at the same time in religion retain 'that feeling of being a child which nothing can extinguish from the heart of man' (Jung). Thus does supernatural belief in God and the Church assist the natural course and development of the psychical life of man. We should expect that the Sacraments would play an important part in producing favourable psychological effects—and this is certainly the case. So Jung speaks of the psychological significance of Baptism which 'lifts a man out of his archaic identification with the world and changes him into a being who stands above it' (*Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, p. 167). We can see what a great part adult baptism would play in Missionary Countries in making men realise and appreciate the value of human personality, duly balanced by the social link of aggregation to the Church. This reminds us of the Initiation ceremonies of pagan peoples

in which the individual is released from the tie to his family and indeed from his whole previous identity by a ritual death and is reborn as a member of his tribe.—*Essays on Contemporary Events* (p. 29).

These ceremonies may be terrifying and painful but they probably give a boy what he wants by withdrawing him from the women and children and associating him solidly with the men. It must tend to prevent 'leakage' if such a thing were possible in these close-knit tribes.

In fact when we consider this problem of 'leakage' in our own country it seems that what our boys desire is to become more and more associated with the men and so they would welcome some grade or distinction which would mark them as having passed out of school stage and would be pleased if the effect of this was to join many of them together in a sort of group. At first sight it would seem, from theological considerations, that confirmation would effect this. But psychologically this seems not to be the case. For one thing it is often (and most rightly) given at too early an age for such results. First Communion is also given early so that there is no new Sacrament for him to look forward to—in fact the only

one that remains is Extreme Unction, for Holy Matrimony is not for all.

To speak purely psychologically one might be surprised that there is not a Sacrament for the crisis of Adolescence. But the Church does not provide a (more or less exciting) ceremony to mark and assist the boy's emergence into manhood, instead of which she gets to work earlier, at the age of reason, and so has some years of quiet sacramental life whereby the boy is assimilated to all the faithful—and if the men of the district receive Holy Communion frequently, his psychological longing for association with them will be duly satisfied. Indeed hero-worship of a sort is to be expected, and can be used and directed. The writer remembers a Catholic working man speaking with admiration of a priest he had known years before. He mentioned his qualities—six feet high, a grand priest he was, and a hand like a shovel. The growing boy tends to think little of law but much of a leader. He also likes to know why he should do this or that. Someone looking back on his secular education has remarked that it would have been better if his instructors had spent rather less time on what was to be learned and rather more on *why* it should be learned. In the same way perhaps more could be done in explaining the reasons for going to Mass as well as emphasising the duty of doing so.

So it appears that the problem of leakage is, in one respect, a too eager advance towards manhood with a consequent rejection of the ways of childhood—including Religion which is so often too closely identified with the school. So the phenomenon is an example of inability to pass from one stage of life to another in a satisfactory way.

Indeed in all life and thought we must retain some grip on what has gone before as well as reach out to grasp what lies ahead. So besides normal people, there will be those who hold on too long to thoughts and ways that are, or should be, over and done, and on the other hand those who relinquish them too quickly. This is called 'Perseveration' and the extraordinary thing is that—

It appears that very high and low perseverators are prone to be unreliable and difficult; the best characters, on the other hand, are medium perseverators.—*A Guide to Mental Testing*, by Cattell (p. 207).

This question is being examined by those concerned with moral delinquency and theories are being formed. Thus the Rev. J. S. Cammack, S.J. writes:

It may be suggested that the problem of 'moral defect' is in reality a problem of temperamental defect to be explained by a defect in

the perseveration factor. . . . *Moral Problems of Mental Defect* (p. 176).

But if perhaps inability to 'let go' at the right time may be a factor in some moral defect, on the other hand the power of 'letting go' seems to be an important element in what we know as genius. Discoverers and inventors must have arrived at a fresh and novel point of view—and this must involve the abandonment of certain aspects and theories which may be long established and their relinquishment requires insight to perceive at least vaguely the new position and courage to abandon elements of the old—altogether more difficult than it sounds. Thus to appreciate the theory of relativity one would have to 'let go' the notion of Newtonian space. No doubt it is this which accounts for the fact that in the careers of great thinkers there is often an interruption or disturbance (at the time regarded probably as a misfortune) which seems to have been necessary in order to jerk the mind on to the new view point. We may recall the theory of Conversion in *Varieties of Religious Experience* by William James. There is the existing centre of personality and interests, then a new centre begins to be incubated as it were, and that unconsciously. Before a man can act from the new centre he must abandon the old.

Here a homely illustration may help. There used to be a common sort of puzzle which consisted of a sketch and one was asked to find some other face or figure buried in the lines. The one essential for success was ability to renounce the ordinary view, to un-think the picture of its meaning, not to see the picture for what it was and so suddenly the hidden form would jump up. An example of this is when someone who has been studying non-Catholic history sees (with more or less suddenness) the figure of the Pope. If it is the case that genius requires some sort of dislocation in the mental processes we seem to get the paradoxical situation that the more we improve our educational system the less are we likely to have in the way of genius. For improvements nowadays are rather in the way of making study more smooth and streamlined, by removing obstacles and providing answers almost before the pupil can appreciate the question. Perhaps we see the value of the 'objections' which are such a feature in the *Summa* of St Thomas. It seems that the intellectual life, like the moral life, requires opposition to produce its finest fruit.

But in ordinary life the principle of 'letting go' is important, even in the purely bodily sphere. Years ago William James wrote an excellent essay on the *Gospel of Relaxation* and now there is an elaborate system for mentally concentrating on different parts of

the body and so getting a relaxation as superior to a usual rest as a Turkish bath is to an ordinary one. And the reason for this appears to be that muscles and fibres do not always go slack and easy merely because we cease to require their tension, but they seem to await a positive message of a rather special kind before they do so—quite like the boy on the burning deck. Those who have read *The Inside of the Cup* by Fr F. Valentine, O.P. will recall the use he makes of this method of relaxation in dealing with certain kinds of temptation.

The art of 'Letting Go' is thus connected with many things—and in one aspect it is another name for Trust.



THE SOLITARY RELIGIOUS LIFE

BY

RUSTICUS

RELIGIOUS life implies certain specific characteristics: the vowed and dedicated life; the three counsels of Poverty, Chastity and Obedience; the ordered sequence of Mass, the daily Office and Mental Prayer; with some element of work and recreation at ordered times. We are so much used to the life's being lived in community that we are apt to think the Religious life implies, *per se*, Community life. But to be precise, this is not so.

It is however recognised and revered in its two most common (coenibitical) forms, and it is unlikely that any proposed adaptations would change these fundamental bases of the life—the 'family' life of Benedictine monachism, and the collegiate or communal life of the various orders of friars, where the members are not tied as monks are, to one House, but—moving about among the Houses of their own Province at the will of the Order's duly constituted authority—are bound by the Constitutions of the Order, and live within its framework a life full of change of habitat and movement.

But strangely enough, while in the world these two types of life, family and communal, in their secular aspect are accompanied by the third way of 'living alone' to an extent unknown in previous centuries, the solitary religious life is now almost non-existent. The attitude towards it, in England, also is curiously contradictory, and in the main seems a swing-away from the traditional one. Its opponents put forward its danger as a reason for its non-revival, as if

heroic sanctity were no longer to be the aim of the servant of Christ. It is good in this connection to remember Father Alban Butler (one sufficiently modern to be heeded today) on the life of St Giles. He says:

Complete and uninterrupted solitude is a state which few are able to bear with unabated fervour and without fatal relaxation. A man in solitude whom sloth warps or whose conversation is not always with God and his angels is his own most dangerous tempter and worst company. Aristotle having defined man as a social creature, or one born for society, added that he who lives alone must either be a god or a beast. But the Philosopher was unacquainted with the happiness of religious contemplation. The old Christian proverb is more exact: that he who lives always alone is either an angel or a devil. This state therefore is not without snares and dangers, nor does an hermitage necessarily make a saint. But when a person, by an extraordinary call, embraces it with fervour and strenuously applies himself to all the exercises of retirement and penance, such an one, being disengaged from all earthly ties, exchanges the society of a vain and sinful world for that of God and holy spirits, and has certainly attained the highest degree of happiness under heaven; this state is its novitiate, and in some degree an anticipation of its eternal sweet and noble employment. He who accompanies the exercise of contemplation and divine love with zealous and undaunted endeavours to conduct others to the same glorious end shall be truly 'great in the kingdom of heaven'.

Let us try therefore to see what warrant the history of Christianity, the teaching of Holy Scripture and the authority of the Church, the needs of the world today and of the spirit of man, give for such a way of life. And let us consider too whether 'adaptations' of the traditional eremitical life are needed for it to be of value for the glory of God and the salvation of souls in our own times.

From the time of Saint Paul, the first hermit, to the protestant secession, in England as elsewhere, wherever Catholic Christianity has come, the religious solitary, be he hermit or anker, has lighted his lonely candle in the wilder and darker solitudes up and down the land. As conventual religious life developed and increased, his small single light was seen burning steadily beside the great religious houses, whether self-contained Benedictine abbeys or the priories of Friars with their constant comings and goings, and also --the 'still point in a turning world'--he kept his stillness in the very heart of the kaleidoscopic movement of city life. He was, in England up to the time of the Tudor devastation, a normal part of Catholic religious life, and, as far as Dominicans are concerned,

it seems almost as though an anker or ankress was welcomed as an adjunct to the great priories to take the place of the house of contemplative nuns, whose presence near a priory was one of its great sources of spiritual power. (As indeed it is today.) It will be remembered that only one such house, Dartford, existed in medieval England. Constantly one hears of this solitary—Richard Fearn at Lynn, Marjorie Clyte in the churchyard at the London Blackfriars. William Dingle at Oxford, Alice Oliver by the Blackfriars at Salisbury—just as in city and village alike one finds records of the unattached solitary, living under the eaves of a church, in a cave or forest hut, or an ordinary little dwelling house. The hermit went and came from his dwelling, had charge of bridges and roads, and had a certain amount of human intercourse. Saint Robert of Knaresborough built a guest-house near his cell since

Heghe and lawe unto hym hyed
In faith for to be edified.

Sometimes they were supported by a monastic house though not living near it: so the contemplative nuns at Dartford supported the hermit of the Bridge by the River Darent. The monks of Garendon had a cell for two solitaires in Cripplegate (St James's), and one anker of London Wall was Simon Appulby, Canon of St Augustine's (possibly the same as that most holy and attractive 'Sir Symon the Anker', self-styled 'wrecched Symon' who was anker in the tourelle by All Hallows, London Wall). So too Cristina of the Wood was under obedience to the abbot of St Albans. But many, especially hermits like Richard Rolle and St Robert of Knaresborough, were, so to speak, solitaires in their own right, and subject to episcopal but not to monastic authority. How native it is to the English temperament is shewn not only by the number of these hermits and ankers in the middle ages whom we recall in the prayer of the English saints (. . . 'all those holy monks and hermits who made this once an isle of saints'), but also by the fact that among the English mystics whose writings were the most notable English contribution to medieval spirituality, practically all were either recluses or were writing for recluses. At the time of the suppression, we know of well over a hundred, either hermits or ankers, up and down England, and at least seven Dominican priories had each its own recluse. In earlier days, numbers seem to have been much greater. When hermits and ankers were turned abroad and the parish churches of England became protestant, naturally the ankerhold by the church, like the hermitage in the dale, fell into decay. Even now the scarcity of Mass in country places would, no doubt, make any revival of the hermit life slow and

uncertain. Yet from the historical aspect, it is a thing that merits attention.

Moreover—and this is a most serious consideration—in especially evil and irreligious times of the world's history there has always been a movement among the few to a life of intense and contemplative prayer: a life that demands a great element of solitude and apartness. This explains the amazing movement to the desert in the time of St Anthony. It is as if the Holy Spirit moved generous souls to a greater ardour in the life of perfection to make up for the coldness of the many and the active antagonism of whole sections of society. The alabaster box is broken and the ointment is poured out on the feet of Christ, not sold for three hundred pence and given to the poor.

In the teaching of Holy Scripture our Lord's words to Martha about Mary are the supreme authority for the contemplative as distinct from the active life, and have been taken as such all through the history of the Church. Mystically, too, the story of Jacob's service for Leah and Rachel has stood for the soul's training in action before it attains to contemplation and gives the clue perhaps to how the contemplative life should be approached. The withdrawal to solitude and prayer in our Lord's own life and those of the Apostles is enough witness to the need for these in every apostolic life, and the Carmelites point to Elijah, the Carthusians to St John the Baptist as their guides to solitude, and to *contemplari et contemplata aliis tradere*. None of these, the critic will say, envisage a whole life of solitude, and if the history of the solitary is studied, it will be clear that (as in all descriptive epithets in the spiritual life) the term is relative. Very few were given to absolute solitude. Disciples attached themselves to desert solitaries. Visitors came to the anchorhold window with their questions on spiritual matters, and their requests for prayer. These things made the life an apostolate, not of prayer only but of human contacts. Even the walled-up anker (whose return today I suppose no one would desire or expect) had a window on the world. Many retired to such places after life in the world or in a religious community.

As regards the authority of the Church, Père Philippe points out that there was never a 'religion' of solitude; but this means there was no vow of solitude as a characteristic of the religious life. But the life was legislated for (*vide* the translation of Canon 41—Council in Trullo—A.D.692, in the January 1949 LIFE OF THE SPIRIT) and the order for enclosing ankers with episcopal blessing still survives and has been reprinted from the York Manual by the Surtees Society. The Church neither enjoins nor forbids the life. But she

most clearly permits it, and it would be interesting to know how many solitaries have been raised to the Altars of the Church.¹

As for the needs of the world today, this is an age of desperate diseases—desperate except for the hope of heroic sanctity and abandonment to the power of God. Our Lady at Fatima, as at Lourdes, asks for prayer rather than action. To enlarge on its apostolic value is unnecessary, and in any case is outside the scope of this article, yet prayer and the witness of the dedicated life (not the good, devout lay life, but the openly dedicated life) seem a supreme need, as in the days of Moses, to strengthen the hands of those more actively engaged in the work of battle against the forces of evil. In the middle ages, when vocations were more numerous, an abbey or a priory—like Witham in Somerset—would be founded as a lantern of prayer and contemplation to show forth religion in a wild and irreligious spot, where the very presence of the monks would be apostolic. Now vocations are few, and the single candle up and down England is the more necessary to give light and to point even though feebly to the true faith.

So we come to the needs of the human spirit.

It would be strange indeed if this third manner of life for religious should have been accepted (if guardedly) and have flourished and produced so many saints and holy ones—(it is not denied that there were also solitaries who were not altogether admirable, and hermitages which were not held in high repute)—in every age of the Church, and now should be unsuited to the human spirit whose essential needs are unchanging and whose vocation may be recognised as always falling into specific categories. A couple of years ago one would have said that the idea of the revival of the solitary life was stirring in men's minds, and in the pages of the *LIFE OF THE SPIRIT* there have been many articles on those English medieval writings for and by solitaries which are mentioned above. In one of the articles discussing the true basis of the religious life which was published some time ago now, 'Medicus' made reference to some of these articles, and also indicated clearly the existence, and the

¹ There is a striking passage, well worth pondering, in an article by Fr Pierre Doyère in his article on Saint Benoît Labre, (also in the December 1948 number of *La Vie Spirituelle*). It runs:

La vocation d'ermite est bien à la source même de toute vie monastique, car tout moine est un solitaire. Même lorsque le discrétion cénobitique s'avère nécessaire pour écarter les dangers du caprice, de la fantasie, de l'illusion et de toutes sortes d'excès, le monastère demeure un groupement de solitaires; l'érémisme ne cesse jamais d'être la réponse idéale de l'âme en quête de Dieu seul, la forme par excellence où réaliser dans leur plénitude les conseils de perfection évangélique; l'histoire confirme d'ailleurs que, dans tout effort de réforme d'une discipline monastique, il y a, sous un aspect ou sous un autre, un retour vers un accent plus érémitique.

difficulties, of this type of contemplative in the world today, where there seems no place for them:

Their whole bent is towards prayer but temperament or their psycho-physical state makes them unfitted for community life; they seem to need more freedom and it is possible that their real vocation is to a life of comparative solitude.

He spoke of Charles de Foucauld as the outstanding example, and adds:

But Father Conrad Pepler, O.P., points out that in the fourteenth century, a period of turbulence and decline, a great host of mystics poured out a flood of mystical writings all over Europe, and he draws a close parallel between that century and our own age. Moreover not a few of these mystics, for example Mother Julian and Richard Rolle, were anchoresses or solitaries. It does not then seem impossible that the vocation to solitude may revive even in these times, however unfavourable they may appear.

Nor are these isolated references. The need for solitude, although solitude within the framework of a remote communal life, was the keynote of articles in the 1946 *LIFE OF THE SPIRIT*—‘Pabbay or the Island Fathers’ and ‘The Opportunity of the Islands’ by Peregrinus; and it was the theme of Charles de Foucauld in the December issue. Father Oswin McGrath’s article on the subject of the possible revival of the solitary life in South Africa apparently called forth more than a few interested letters. Strongest sign of all perhaps of this re-awakening interest is the foundation in France in 1947 at Roquebrune-sur-Argens (Var) of a Desert Carmel with the traditional separate dwellings for solitary hermit-Carmelites, about which there was an article—‘Sur le Chemin du Désert’—in the December 1948 number of *La Vie Spirituelle*.

But it is not necessary to go to South Africa or a French Carmel, or even to the islands of Scotland, to follow the hermit life. Here in England the villages and even the cities are waiting for such solitaries. More than that, it would seem that in other parts of Europe God himself is showing that in this way of solitary prayer his will to combat present evils may be accomplished, by permitting the removal from active works in his service to solitary confinement in prison of so many of his servants, who may well be reaping such holy fruit from their imprisonment as St John of the Cross reaped. What is needed now is the recognition not only of the life as a legitimate way of religion, but also as the complement of the coenobitical forms of religious life, both active and contemplative, whose revival will give balance and strength to the fabric of the Church and will act as a missionary force, especially in a countryside at present of necessity almost outside the scope of the Church’s ministry.

The manner of its revival in a legitimate and ordered form (for it must have strict ordering and the outward signs of religion: the poor cell, the habit, mortification, the regularity of Office and prayer) remains to be considered. Perhaps it will go hand in hand with the foundation of village mission priories to evangelise the entirely non-Catholic areas of our land. It is doubtful if even a modified form of the life of an anker will revive outside the purlieus of religious houses, but a form of hermit life—confined perhaps to those who have passed their first youth and have received the necessary preliminary training in religious life—suited to the age we live in, but moulded on traditional lines, may well come into being. Perhaps it will grow from, or itself mould, some of those adaptations of conventual life which are taking the attention in France and England of religious directors. It may be that there will arise a Mother House for the training of solitaries to which—reversing the Carmelite way—solitaries will return for periods of communal life from time to time, and from which visitations of hermitages would be made (though the ‘Obedience’ of a solitary, be it man or woman, would no doubt be to a Priest-Director). These and similar points would need ‘religious’ consideration. One thing would have to be clear: the training, even if in a community house, would have to be a training of solitaries, not of coenobitical religious. This is the thing that would need most care.

RUSTICUS.



THE ROAD TO CARMEL

HOW I ENTERED THE CARMEL IN COLOGNE

BY

EDITH STEIN¹

Fourth Sunday of Advent,
18th December 1938.



PERHAPS I shall leave this house soon after Christmas. The circumstances which have compelled us to arrange my transfer to Echt are strongly reminiscent of the conditions at the time I entered. There is, no doubt, an inner link between them.

When the Third Reich was set up at the beginning of 1933 I had been for about a year a lecturer at the ‘German Institute for Educational Studies’ in Münster. I lived in the *Collegium Marianum* with a large number of nuns of various

¹ Translated by C. Hastings.

Orders who were there for study and a small group of other students, all of us well taken care of by the Sisters of Notre Dame.

One evening in Lent I came back late from a meeting of the Catholic Academic Union. I do not know whether it was that I had forgotten my key or that there was a key in the lock on the inside, but in any case I could not get in. I rang and knocked to try to get someone to come to a window, but without success. The students living in the rooms overlooking the street had gone on holiday. A gentleman passing by asked if he could be of assistance. As I turned to him he bowed and said, 'Dr Stein—I have only this moment recognised you'. He was a Catholic teacher who took part in a working party at the Institute. He excused himself for a moment to explain things to his wife who with another lady had already gone by. He said a few words to her and then came back to me. 'My wife cordially invites you to spend the night with us.' It was a good solution and I gratefully accepted. They took me to an unpretentious bourgeois house. We sat down in the sitting room. My kind hostess put a bowl of fruit on the table and then went to get a room ready for me. Her husband began a conversation, and told me what American newspapers were publishing about the atrocities being committed against the Jews. They were unconfirmed reports which I will not repeat. I am only concerned with the impression made upon me that evening. I had indeed already heard of severe measures being taken against the Jews. But now on a sudden it was luminously clear to me that once again God's hand was heavy on his people, and that the destiny of this people was my own. I did not let the man sitting opposite me see what was going on inside me. It was plain that he knew nothing of my origin. I usually explain the position on such occasions, but this time I did not. It seemed to me that it would be a violation of the law of hospitality to spoil his night's rest by telling him such a thing.

On Thursday in Passion Week I went to Beuron. Every year since 1928 I had kept Holy Week and Easter with them there, and given myself a quiet time of recollection. This time I had a special reason for wanting to go. I had been constantly thinking during the last few weeks whether there was not something I could do in the Jewish question. I had finally conceived the plan of going to Rome and asking the Holy Father in private audience to issue an Encyclical. But I did not want to take such a step on my own account. I had taken the three vows privately years before. I had found my monastic home, so to speak, in Beuron, and so could regard Abbot Raphael as my father in religion and bring all ques-

tions of importance to him for decision. It was not, however, certain that I should see him. At the beginning of January he had gone on a journey to Japan. But I knew that he would do all he could to be home for Holy Week.

Although taking an outward step of this sort was in accordance with my nature, I felt that it was not yet 'the real thing'. But neither did I know in what the real thing consisted. I broke my journey at Cologne from Thursday afternoon till Friday morning. I had a catechumen there to whom I had to devote some of my time whenever I had an opportunity. I wrote to her to find out where we could go to the Holy Hour that evening. It was the eve of the First Friday in April, and in that Holy Year 1933 our Lord's sufferings were everywhere being commemorated with special solemnity. At eight that evening we found ourselves at the Holy Hour in the Carmel of Cologne-Lindenthal. A priest (Canon Wüsten, as I learnt later) gave an address and announced that this service would be held every Thursday from then on. He spoke beautifully and movingly, but something else deeper than his words was occupying me. I spoke to our Saviour and told him that I knew that it was his cross which was now being laid on the Jewish people. Most of them did not understand it; but those who did understand must accept it willingly in the name of all. I wanted to do that, let him only show me how. When the service was over I had an interior conviction that I had been heard. But in what the bearing of the cross was to consist I did not yet know.

I went on to Beuron next morning. Changing at Immendingen in the evening I met Father Aloys Mager. We went the last part of the journey together. Soon after we had exchanged greetings he told me, as the most important piece of Beuron news: 'Father Abbot arrived back safely from Japan this morning'. So that was all right.

From my enquiries in Rome I learned that, owing to the great pressure of business, I had no chance of a private audience. Only a 'special audience' (that is, in a small group) could be arranged for me. This would not serve my purpose, so I gave up the idea of the journey and submitted my plea in writing. I know that my letter was handed, sealed, to the Holy Father; and some time afterwards I received his blessing for myself and my family. There was no further result. But I have often wondered since whether my letter may not sometimes have come into his mind. For what I predicted about the future of Catholics in Germany was fulfilled step by step in the following years.

Before leaving Beuron I asked Father Abbot what I ought to

do if I had to give up my work in Münster. He found it quite impossible to believe that this could happen. On the journey to Münster I read a newspaper report of a big National Socialist teachers' conference in which denominational organisations too had had to take part. It was clear to me that in educational matters least of all would there be toleration of influences opposed to the régime. The Institute at which I worked was purely Catholic, founded and maintained by the Catholic teachers' union. So its days were doubtless numbered. I must count straight away on the conclusion of my short career as a lecturer.

I arrived back in Münster on 19th April and next day I went to the Institute. The Director was on holiday in Greece. The manager, a Catholic teacher, took me into his office and told me his tale of woe. For weeks he had been having most disturbing interviews and was already quite worn out. 'Just think, Doctor, there has been someone here already saying that no doubt Dr Stein will not be giving lectures any more?' It might be best, he said, if I gave up lecturing for this summer and worked quietly in the Marianum. The situation would be clarified by the autumn, the Institute would perhaps be taken over by the Church, there would then be nothing to prevent my working with it. I took the news very calmly, without accepting the consolation. 'If I can't go on here', I said, 'there is nothing possible for me any more in Germany at all.' The manager expressed his surprise that I should see so clearly although I lived in such retirement and took no further interest in the affairs of the world.

I was almost relieved that the common fate had now really come upon me, but I had of course to consider what I was to do. I asked the president of the Catholic women teachers' union for her opinion. It was at her suggestion that I had come to Münster. She advised me to stay in Münster for the summer at least and to go on with some work I had begun. The union would take care of my maintenance, since the result of my work would in any case be useful to it. If it were not possible to resume my activities at the Institute I could later look round for possibilities abroad. In point of fact I soon received an offer from South America. But by the time that came I had already been shown quite a different road.

About ten days after I returned from Beuron the thought came to me: is it not time at last to enter Carmel? For nearly twelve years Carmel had been my goal; since the summer of 1921 when the 'Life' of our holy mother St Teresa had fallen into my hands and brought to an end my long search for the true faith. When on New Year's Day 1922 I received Holy Baptism I thought that this

was but a preparation for entering the Order. But when a few months later I stood before my mother for the first time since my baptism, it was clear to me that she was not yet ready for this second blow. She would not die, but it would fill her with a bitterness for which I could not be answerable. I must wait in patience. My spiritual advisers too assured me of this. Waiting had lately become very hard. I had become a stranger in the world. Before I took the Münster post and after my first term there I had begged to be allowed to enter the Order. I was refused, out of consideration for my mother and also of the influence which I had had for some years in Catholic life. I had submitted. But now these barriers had broken down. My influence was at an end, and would my mother not rather think of me in a convent in Germany than in a school in South America? On the 30th April—Good Shepherd Sunday—the Church of St Ludger was celebrating his feast with a thirteen hours prayer. I went there late in the afternoon, and said to myself: I will not leave until I see clearly whether I may now enter Carmel. As the final blessing was given, I received the Good Shepherd's consent.

I wrote the same evening to Father Abbot. But he was in Rome, and I did not wish to send my letter across the frontier. It had to wait on my desk until I could send it to Beuron. It was the middle of May by the time I had permission to take the first preliminary steps. I did so without delay. Through my catechumen in Cologne I asked for an interview with Dr Cosack. We had met in Aachen in October 1932. She had introduced herself to me because she knew that I was close in spirit to Carmel, and she told me that she was closely connected with the Order, and especially with the Carmel at Cologne. I wanted now to find out from her what was to be done. She sent me word that she could give me some time the following Sunday—Rogation Sunday—or on the Feast of the Ascension.

I got this news by the morning post on Saturday. At midday I went to Cologne. I telephoned Dr Cosack and made an appointment to go for a walk with her next morning. Neither she nor my catechumen knew yet why I had come. The latter went with me to Mass at the Carmel. On the way back she said, 'Edith, while I was kneeling beside you, the thought came to me: She isn't wanting now to enter Carmel?' I did not want to keep my secret from her any longer. She promised to keep it to herself. A little later Dr C. arrived. As soon as we had set out together on the road to the Stadtwald, I told her what I wanted. I immediately added the things that were against it: my age (42), my Jewish origin, my

lack of funds. She thought all this of no great importance. She even held out the hope that I would be accepted here in Cologne, because a new foundation was being made in Silesia which would leave some vacancies. A new foundation at the gates of my own city, Breslau! It seemed a fresh sign from heaven.

I told Dr C. about my past development, so that she could form her own opinion of my Carmelite vocation. She then herself suggested that we should pay a visit to the Cologne Carmel. She was particularly intimate with Sister Marianne (Countess Praschma), who was to go to Silesia for the new foundation. She wanted to talk to her first. While she was in the parlour I knelt in the chapel, close to the altar of the little St Teresa. There came over me the peace of one who has reached his goal.

The conversation lasted a long time. When Dr C. finally called me she said confidently 'I think it will be all right'. She had talked first with Sister Marianne, then with Mother Prioress (then Mother Josepha of the Most Blessed Sacrament), and prepared the ground for me. But the convent's daily round left no more time now for the parlour. I was to come back after Vespers. I was back in the Chapel long before Vespers, and joined in praying it. Then followed May devotions behind the grill. It was about half past three when I was at last called to the parlour. Mother Josepha and our dear Mother (Teresia Renata de Spiritu Sancto, then sub-prioress and novice-mistress) were at the grill. Once more I gave an account of my journey: how the thought of Carmel had never left me; I had been teaching for eight years with the Dominicans at Speyer, was most intimately united with the whole community, and yet could not enter there; Beuron I thought of as the fore-court of Heaven, but I never thought of becoming a Benedictine; it always seemed to me that our Lord had been keeping something for me in Carmel which I could find only there. This made an impression. Mother Teresia doubted only whether they could accept the responsibility of taking someone out of the world who had still much that she could accomplish outside². Finally I was told that I should come back when Father Provincial was there; he was expected shortly.

That evening I went back to Münster. I had got further than I had expected at my arrival. But there was a long wait for Father Provincial. During the days of Pentecost I spent most of my time in the Cathedral of Münster. The Holy Ghost gave me courage to

² A remark intended to remind the postulant that she could not count on being able to continue her intellectual work in Carmel. To this she gave the beautiful answer: 'It is not human activity that can help us but the Passion of Christ. It is a share in that that I desire'.

write to Mother Josepha and ask urgently for an answer, since in my uncertain situation I had to be clear about what I could count on. I was at once summoned to Cologne. The Superior of the Convent would see me, they would not wait for Father Provincial any longer. This time, too, I was to be presented to the Chapter nuns, who had to vote on my admission. I was once again in Cologne from Saturday afternoon till Sunday evening (the 18th and 19th of June, I think), and talked to Mother Josepha, Mother Teresa and Sister Marianne before I visited the Monsignor.

On the way to see Dr Lenné I was caught in a thunderstorm and arrived wet through. I had to wait for an hour before he appeared. When we had exchanged salutations he passed his hand over his forehead and said, 'Now, what was it that you wanted? I have quite forgotten.' I replied that I was a postulant for Carmel and had been sent to see him. He was now *au fait*, and stopped addressing me as 'du'. It was clear to me afterwards that he had done this to try me. . . . He then dismissed me with his blessing.

After Vespers the assembled Chapter nuns came to the grill. Our dear senior, little Sister Teresia, came up close to it so as to be able to see and hear. Sister Aloysia, the liturgical enthusiast, wanted to hear about Beuron; that was something I had to offer. Finally I had to sing a little song. I had already been told about this the day of my former visit, but I had taken it for a joke. I sang 'Segne, Du Maria' rather shyly and softly. Afterwards I said that it had been harder than speaking before an audience of a thousand people. I heard later that the Sisters did not understand this, because they knew nothing of my speaking activities. After the Sisters had gone Mother Josepha said that the voting could only take place the following morning. So for this evening I had to go away without a decision.

Sister Marianne, with whom I finally spoke alone, held out the prospect of having the verdict by telegram. Next day, in fact, the telegram came: 'Glad agreement. Greetings. Carmel.' I read it and went into the Chapel to make my thanksgiving.

We had already discussed what was to follow. By the 15th July I would have settled everything in Münster, and on the 16th I would keep the feast of the Queen of Carmel with them in Cologne. I was to live for a month as a guest in the outer part of the house, go home for a visit in the middle of August, and on our dear Mother's feast, October 15th, I should be received into the enclosure. There was the further prospect of my being transferred later to the Silesian Carmel.

Six big cases of books preceded me to Cologne. I wrote that I

supposed no Carmelite had ever brought such a dowry before! Sister Ursula took care of them, and gave herself immense trouble trying to keep Theology, Philosophy, Philology, etc., as the cases were marked, separate from each other while unpacking them. But they all got mixed up in the end!

Only a few people in Münster knew where I was going. I wanted to keep it as quiet as possible until my family had been told. The Sister Superior at the Marianum was one of the few. I had confided it to her after the telegram came. She had been much concerned about me, and was now very happy. Shortly before my departure there was a farewell evening in the music room. The students had put great affection into their preparations for it, and the nuns also took part. I said a few words of thanks, and told them that when they heard later where I was they would be glad with me.

The Sisters of the House gave me a cross with relics which the late Bishop Johannes von Poppenburg had given them. The Sister Superior brought it to me on a silver plate covered with roses. Five students and the librarian from the Institute saw me off at the station. I had great bouquets of roses to bring to the Queen of Carmel for her feast. Less than a year and a half before, I had come to Münster as a stranger. Apart from my official activities I had lived in cloistered retirement. Nevertheless I was now leaving behind a large circle of people bound to me in love and loyalty. I have always kept the lovely old town and all the country round Münster in affectionate and grateful remembrance.

I had written home that I had been accepted by some Sisters in Cologne and would be going there for good in October. They took it for a new appointment and congratulated me.

My month outside the enclosure was a very happy time. I followed the daily programme, working except during the hours of prayer, and coming often to the parlour. Any questions that arose I submitted to Mother Josepha; her decision was always the same as I would have reached myself, and this agreement of minds made me very happy. My catechumen was often with me. She wanted to be baptised before my departure, so that I could be her godmother. On 1st August Monsignor Lenné baptised her in the Cathedral Chapter House, and next morning she made her first Communion in the Convent Chapel. Her husband came to both ceremonies, but he could not make up his mind to follow her. On 10th August at Trier I met Father Abbot and received his blessing for my difficult journey to Breslau. I saw the Seamless Robe, and prayed for strength, and I knelt for a long while before the beautiful miraculous statue in St Matthias. I was welcomed for the night at the Carmel

in Cordel, where our dear Mother Teresia Renata had been novice-mistress for nine years before she was called to Cologne as subprioress. On 14th August my godchild took me to Maria Laach for the feast of the Assumption. From there I went on to Breslau.

My sister Rosa was waiting for me at the station. Since she had for a long time belonged at heart to the Church and was completely at one with me, I told her at once what I was doing. She showed no surprise, but I saw that even to her the thought of it had never occurred. The others asked me no questions at all for two or three weeks. Only my nephew Wolfgang (then twenty-one years old) asked as soon as he came to visit me what I was going to do in Cologne. I told him the truth, and begged him to keep it to himself.

The events of the day were causing my mother great suffering. She was continually being aroused to fresh exclamations that 'there could be such wicked people'. On top of this came a personal loss which went very deep. My sister Erna was taking over the practice of our friend Lilli Berg, who was going with her family to Palestine. The Bibersteins had to move into the Bergs' house in the south of the town and leave our home. Erna and her two children were my mother's consolation and joy. To have to do without having them about her was bitterly painful. But despite all these cares pressing upon her, she came to life again when I arrived. Her cheerfulness and her sense of humour broke out again. When she came home from the office, she liked to bring her knitting and sit down beside my desk and talk about all her domestic and business worries. I got her to tell me all her memories, too, as material for a history of our family which I began to write. It was evident that being together like this was doing her good. But all the time I had to think, 'If you knew!'

It was a great comfort to me that Sister Marianne, with her cousin Sister Elizabeth [Countess Stolberg, † 1948] were in Breslau getting ready for the new foundation. They had gone from Cologne to Breslau before I did. Sister Marianne had come to see my Mother and give her my love. While I was still away she came twice more to our house and was very charming to my mother. When I went to visit her at the Ursulines in the Ritterplatz where she was staying I was able to speak freely of what was on my mind. I, on the other hand, was brought into all the joys and sorrows of the foundation, and was able once to go with the two Sisters to see the site in Pawelwitz (now Wendelborn).

I helped Erna a great deal during the move. Going on a tram to their new home she finally asked about what was to happen in Cologne. When I gave her my reply she became very pale and

tears came into her eyes. 'It is a terrible world', she said. 'What makes a person happy seems to others the worst thing that could happen to him.' She made no attempt to hold me back. A few days later she gave me a message from her husband, saying that if it was concern for how I was to live that had moved me to this decision, I must know that I could live with them so long as they had anything themselves. (My brother-in-law in Hamburg had said the same.) Erna added that she had to pass this on to me: she knew quite well that as far as I was concerned such motives did not come into the question.

On the first Sunday in September I was alone at home with my mother. She was sitting at the window with her knitting and I was beside her. Suddenly the long-expected question came: 'What are you going to do with the Sisters in Cologne?' 'Live with them.' Then came a desperate effort to deter me. My mother did not stop working. Her wool got into a tangle; she tried with trembling hands to unravel it, and I helped her, while the dispute went on.

There was no more peace from now on. A cloud hung over the whole house. From time to time my mother made a new attempt to shake me. This again would be followed by silent despair. My niece Erika, the most convinced Jewess in the family, also thought it her duty to work on me. My brothers and sisters did not try, because they considered it hopeless. It got even worse when my sister Else came from Hamburg for mother's birthday. Though my mother usually controlled herself when with me, talking to Else she became extremely overwrought. My sister recounted all these outbreaks to me, because she thought that I did not know my mother's state of mind.

The family was also burdened with great economic worry. For a long time the business had been going very badly. And now half our house, where the Bibersteins had been living, stood empty. People came every day to see it, but nothing ever came of it. Among the most eager applicants was a group of Protestant clergy. When two of the pastors came for a second visit, my mother asked me to go into the empty part of the house with them, because she was already very tired. I progressed so far with these two gentlemen that we drew up all the conditions. I passed them on to my mother, and then wrote on her instructions to the Head Pastor to ask him for a written acceptance, which was given. All the same, shortly before my departure the arrangement threatened to break down. I wanted to relieve my mother of this worry at least, and I went to see the clergyman where he was staying. It seemed that there was nothing further to be done. But as I tried to take my leave

he said, 'Now, you are looking really sad. I am sorry.' I told him that my mother had so many troubles to bear at present. He asked sympathetically what sort of troubles they were. I told him briefly of my conversion and my intention of entering a convent. It made a great impression. 'You shall know, before you go there, that you have won a heart here.' He called his wife in, and after a short discussion they decided to call another meeting of the Parish Committee and put the case before them once more. And before my departure the Head Pastor and his colleague came to our house to conclude the agreement. As he went out he said to me in a low voice, 'God keep you'.

Sister Marianne had one more private talk with my mother. It did not achieve much. Sister Marianne could not decide (as my mother hoped) to deter me from going. And no other consolation was acceptable. Neither Sister, on the other hand, dared to encourage and strengthen me in my resolution. The decision was so difficult that no one could say with certainty whether this road or that was the right one. Good reasons could be advanced for either. I had to take the step entirely in the darkness of faith. I often thought during those weeks, 'Which of us will break, my mother or myself?' But we both held till the last day.

Shortly before I went I had my teeth seen to. While I was sitting in the dentist's waiting room the door opened and my niece Susel came in. She flushed with delight. Our appointments had been made for the same time without our knowing it. We went into the surgery together, and then she went home with me. She clutched my arm and I took her brown hand in mine. Susel was then twelve, but very mature and thoughtful for her age. I had never been allowed to talk to the children about the change in my belief. But Erna had now told them everything; I was very grateful to her. I asked the child to go to see her grandmother often after I had gone. She promised. 'Why are you doing this now?' she asked. I could hear in it the kind of parental conversations she had been overhearing. I gave her my reasons as I would to an adult. She listened thoughtfully and understood.

Two days before I left, her father (Hans Biberstein) visited me. He felt impelled to tell me his objections, though he expected no result. What I was planning seemed to him to draw a yet sharper line between me and the Jewish people—at this moment when it was being so oppressed. He could not understand that from my point of view it seemed quite different.

The last day I spent at home was 12th October, my birthday. It was at the same time a Jewish festival, the end of the Feast of

Tabernacles. My mother went to the service at the Synagogue of the Rabbinical Seminary. I went with her, because we wanted to spend this day as far as possible completely in common. Erika's favourite teacher, a distinguished scholar, gave a fine sermon. On the way there in the tram we had not spoken much. So as to give some small comfort I had said the first period was only a trial. But that was no help. 'If you undertake a trial period, I know that you will go through with it.' Now my mother wanted to walk home. About three quarters of an hour, and she was eighty-four! But I had to consent, for I could see that she wanted very much to talk with me undisturbed.

'It was a beautiful sermon, wasn't it?'

'Yes.'

'Then it is possible to be pious as a Jew?'

'Certainly—if one has not learnt anything more.'

Then came the despairing reply:

'Why have you learnt more? I don't want to say anything against him. He may have been a very good man. But why did he make himself God?'

After lunch she went to the office, so that my sister Frieda should not be alone during my brother's lunch hour. But she told me she would come back very soon, and did so (for my sake only; otherwise she was always in the office all day). During the afternoon and evening we had many guests—my brothers and sisters, all their children, my own friends. That was a good thing, because it made a diversion. But it was hard when, one after another, they said goodbye and went away. In the end my mother and I were alone in the room; my sisters still had clearing away and washing up to do. Then she hid her face in her hands and began to weep. I stood behind her chair and laid her silver head on my breast. We stayed so a long while, until she let me persuade her to go to bed. I took her upstairs and helped her to undress, for the first time in my life. Then I stayed sitting on her bed until she herself sent me to get some sleep. I think neither of us had any rest that night.

My train went about eight in the morning. Else and Rosa wanted to go with me to the station. Erna had also wanted to come, but I asked her instead to come to the house early and stay with my mother. I knew that she more than anyone else would be able to calm her. We two youngest girls had always kept our childish tenderness towards our mother. The others were shy of showing it, though their love was certainly not less.

At half past five I went out as always to the first Mass at St Michael's church. Then we were all together for breakfast. Erna

came about seven. My mother tried to take something, but soon she pushed away her cup and began to weep as on the evening before. I went to her again and held her in my arms until it was time to go. Then I signed to Erna to take my place. I put on my hat and coat in the next room. Then came the parting. My mother embraced me and kissed me very tenderly. Erika thanked me for all my help (I had worked with her over her teacher's examination, and while I was packing she had come to me with her questions). Afterwards she said, 'The Eternal be with you'. As I embraced Erna my mother wept aloud. I went quickly out. Rosa and Else followed me. When the tram came past our house there was no one at the window, as there had always been, to wave goodbye again.

At the station we had to wait a little for the train to come in. Else clung tightly to me. When I had secured a seat, and was looking down at my sisters, I was struck by the difference between them. Rosa was as calm as if she were going with me into the peace of the cloister. But Else in her suffering suddenly looked like an old woman.

At last the train began to move. The two of them waved for as long as there was anything to see. Finally they disappeared. I could retreat to my place in the compartment. So what I had hardly dared to hope for was now real. There could be no violent access of joy. All that lay behind me was too terrible for that. But I was in deep peace—in the haven of the divine Will.

It was late in the evening when I got to Cologne. My godchild had begged that I should spend the night with them once more. I was not to be received into the enclosure till after Vespers next day. I told the convent by telephone next morning of my arrival, and was able to come to the grill to be welcomed. We were back soon after lunch, and in the Chapel for Vespers: the First Vespers of our holy Mother. As I was kneeling there before it began, I heard someone whispering at the sacristy turn, 'Is Edith there?' Then some huge white chrysanthemums were brought out. Some teachers from the Palatinate had sent them by way of greetings, and I was to see them before they were made part of the altar decorations.

After Vespers we had to go and have coffee together. Then a lady came who introduced herself as the sister of our dear Mother Teresia Renata. She asked which of us was the postulant, as she wanted to give her some encouragement. But that was not necessary. This patroness and my godchild went with me to the enclosure door. It opened at last, and in deep peace I stepped across the threshold into the House of the Lord.

LOURDES: A JOURNAL

BY

NEVILLE BRAYBROOKE



TUESDAY: Seven o'clock; it has been a hot, sweltering day and down through the dusty vineyards of Bordeaux the train, like a caterpillar, has made its way on the last lap of the journey. A courier has said that we will be in Lourdes in twenty minutes and already in other carriages other pilgrims are singing the

Ave; in our own compartment, in a formal English way, we remain mute. One of the priests begins to say the rosary to himself and we all follow suit. For the last few minutes we have been winding with the Gave as it runs its twisting course, never having lost sight of it for more than a few seconds. Then at last for one brief moment the Grotto comes into view: at such a distance on an initial encounter it is difficult to gain any perspective of it, for all that can be seen is one blaze of candles; of many flickers knit together into one flame that rises in the evening stillness as a prayer. For some reason I want to break the silence; to cheer as the Italians do when the Pope is carried into St Peter's. But I remember that I am an Englishman and I begin thinking about taking my suitcase off the rack.

Dinner over, it is time to seek out the Grotto; to give thanks for a safe arrival.

Going through the town for the first time one is horrified: nearly every other shop seems a piety stall. As one walks down La Rue de la Grotte, vendor after vendor plies one with the same wares—candles, rosaries, statues, post-cards (two francs plain, twelve francs coloured). If one came expecting a small village with a narrow street and a number of hotels, one is sadly disappointed: here is a town the size of Oxford which can accommodate over 40,000 people. The first illusion about Lourdes—that it is an unsophisticated hamlet—is dispelled.

Down in the Rosary square the torchlight procession is just beginning. The singing sounds strangely united: then one realises that it is being relayed; that it is being led by a group of priests standing on the steps of the Rosary Church. It is an odd experience to stand and stare; to let the procession file past one as each contingent sings in its own language and then becomes one in the chorus-verses. *Et unam, sanctam, catholicam et apostolicam Ecclesiam.* . . . For

the time being, however, one still remains somewhat aloof, a sight-seer rather than a pilgrim. As the procession gathers numbers and begins to trail up and down the ramps on each side of the square, the upper church is lit: it is not floodlit but lit with bulbs which drape its spire and entrance as if it were Brighton Pier. The second illusion about Lourdes—that it is a shrine of rustic beauty—is dispelled.

Yet a fragment of that rustic beauty still remains, and it is to be found at the Grotto. During processions the Grotto is comparatively empty and, against the artificiality of the loud-speakers and lighting-effects, it has a simplicity of its own which makes it both a retreat and at the same time the centre of everything. The rows of crutches alone are a testimony to this. Some of them are quite new.

WEDNESDAY: After Mass at the Church of the Seven Dolours, at breakfast one finds somebody talking about a miracle; about a girl who on the recent French National Pilgrimage was cured on the return journey between Lourdes and Paris. One is eager to know more. But that is always the way in Lourdes; miracles are passed round by word of mouth, since not until a year has elapsed does the Church give them her official sanction.

In the afternoon it is time for the baths. One takes one's place, thinking, as the sick are wheeled into the enclosure—for whom shall I offer my bath? It is hard to decide because there are so many needy cases. Over there lies a boy—born in 1925 as his stretcher proclaims—suffering from palsy; another small child of five or six—a moron—is led in by his father. First as a spectator one watches, then as a participant one joins in with the priest as he leads the people in their public prayers. In between the rosary-decades one's attention wanders to the brancardiers as they help the sick towards the *Piscines*. As a body of men they are especially impressive, with their refined aristocratic faces and their gentility of manner pervasive in all their actions but nowhere emphatic. One pauses to reflect: it is strange this way Catholicism so often is composed of two extremes—the poorest and the richest (one notices the same phenomenon in London during the annual Tyburn Walk).

Inside one's cubicle the air is sweaty and misty, like a bathing tent. Rather than linger I decide to undress fast and thus be the first of my group to be dipped. At the steps into the bath, with a clammy loin cloth girded round one, the grey water looks singularly uninviting. Again as the two attendants let one lie back in it, despite its uninviting greyness, the water feels icy. There can be no doubt

about it that it is spring water direct from the source. Undried as one dresses, one feels oddly warm.

Outside, the mother of the boy born in 1925 waits, her arms outstretched in a prayer of supplication. When they bring him out, she goes over to him; he is still twitching. A voice mutters in patois that he is better: in clearer and differing accents the cry is taken up and runs through the crowd. Other voices intermingle: they declare that no two miracles are the same, nor cures always instantaneous. Uncertain, one leaves.

By four o'clock the sick are lined up under the trees in the main square. Between the rows of sick, nurses and nursing sisters are carrying flasks of Lourdes water, ready to hand them to those in need. As the procession nears its end the eucharistic canopy comes to a halt; the Bishop surrounded by servers and acolytes steps with the Blessed Sacrament towards the rows of sick; behind him troop a small legion of doctors. Each section of the sick he blesses; as he does so and the various invocations follow one after the other—the slow, dignified Italian, the more exclamatory French—one waits tensely, expecting a miracle. As the group gradually make their way along the lines of sick accompanied by the different cries and responses—'Lord say but the word and I shall be healed'—one feels this is probably the nearest one can be to knowing what it felt like when Christ walked amongst the lame at Galilee; one thinks, now, if ever, there should be a sign from heaven. Ultimately the procession ends: one has seen no miracle and one feels rather chagrined—but perhaps this is the feeling of all when they arrive: it is certainly not the feeling with which one leaves.

THURSDAY: For today a visit to Bernadette's house has been arranged. There is nothing very special about her home; it is just a humble little peasant's cottage of the last century. Later in the morning one visits another small house in the town where she lived for some while. The walls are lined with other pilgrims' mementoes—photographs and visiting cards: on some of them is written, 'Bernadette priez pour nous'. One becomes especially aware of Bernadette: although she did not live here long her presence pervades the rooms. It is similar in Rome in the house in which Keats died. There is a historical presence about these rooms which only great spirits can impart: in this particular house which was given to the Soubirous in 1867, it is as if Bernadette might be in the next room. Of course, when it comes to it, this is not so peculiar after all: indeed if in this context one may be permitted to use twentieth century terminology one might say that prayer is a kind of telephone conversation—the saints are always there to answer one.

This evening is the day when the English pilgrimage can have midnight Mass. Leaving afterwards, Lourdes seems extraordinarily quiet: but it is not empty. Already priests and their servers are making their way up to the crypt to say early Masses. From midnight to midday Mass seems continuous.

One walks back to the hotel and ahead there is a small band of Irishmen walking arm-in-arm. They are singing, somewhat dreamily, the hymn 'Star of the Sea'. The sight is not unfamiliar but the words are: how often in other European towns and cities one has witnessed the same scene, but where the walk has been a drunken sprawl and the song a string of barrack-room obscenities.

FRIDAY. Appropriately enough the morning is given over to the Stations of the Cross. Never before have I known such a long Stations of the Cross: I suppose all in all one walks about two miles. At the Seventh Station they are repainting the life-size figures and as our party approaches them, a workman takes a swig from his bottle. After the first gulp he discreetly turns away; evidently he has noticed our group and thinks it in bad taste to drink before pilgrims. At the Twelfth Station there is Mass. After Mass—and some have been making this way of the Cross barefoot—as one clammers down from this rugged representation of Calvary one has a new understanding of the Christian religion. The week before I had seen an open air production of Goethe's *Faust* and its theme of redemption struck me on this occasion with an added force. For here can be seen redemption simultaneously in human terms in two lights. On the one hand one sees the penance symbolised by those making the Stations of the Cross ascending to Heaven, whilst on the other side of the hill it is descending upon the baths, blessed every so often with the power to heal. It is as if the tears and sweat of men are being drawn up like dew and bestowed as a rain of mercy upon those who need it most.

SATURDAY: An excursion to Gavarnie in the Pyrenees.

SUNDAY: Tomorrow the pilgrimage will be over. Today, then, will be a day for crystallising impressions; and the horarium is much the same as on previous days. At the High Mass there is a sermon on the priesthood: it is highly rhetorical and savours of last century oratory. There are people standing all the way up the aisles and at times they annoy one; they fidget and push and fidget. One is inclined to agree with the critic who said that the Americans should take over Lourdes for a year because then there might be some hope of organisation. As it is the French say it is their shrine and therefore they can behave as they please. Again at lunch a woman

says, 'Did you hear that Belgian sermon?', and goes on, 'When the Belgians pray, why, it is as if they were scolding, not asking. . . .' Again at tea in a café in the upper part of the town a conversation is going on. 'This place is a gold mine. . . . Did you know that the authorities tried to impose a five-franc tax on all pilgrims staying in Lourdes? and do you know how the bishop retaliated? . . . He said if they did, he would ban all national pilgrimages for a year. . . .' Certainly there are two spirits in Lourdes: that of the town and that of the Grotto, and they conflict. It is a somewhat different conflict to that which rages, say, in Oxford 'between town and gown', because the conflict is of a more serious order: it is one between the secular and ecclesiastical authorities. Again in spite of the monstrous commercialisation of piety in the shops (it runs to tablets of soap stamped with the apparitions on them and sweets made from Grotto water) one cannot deny that there is a demand for it. Again one cannot deny that there is an element of hysteria (sometimes considerably more than an element) in the crowds. There is for instance a distinctly different atmosphere amongst those who watch the blessing of the sick from outside and those who are beside the sick whilst they are being blessed. Indeed if Lourdes has a secret it is here, for it is amazing how the sick accept their suffering with equanimity and patience. Theirs is a spirit of resignation and total surrender to God; no concessions are asked and sacrifice is the keynote. Long after one has left one remembers their tranquil faces, since it is not a town bestrewn with bad repository art, a church lit like a pier, nor a series of moon-eyed statues, which stay to the fore in the mind's eye: these remembrances only become fragments of the experience as a whole. Rather, as the train sets out for Paris, past Bordeaux Cathedral, past Poitiers Cathedral, another and more crucial question comes to mind: when peasants believe, what is the architect's answer? Patrician Rome and plebeian Lourdes, what a contrast: but the same spirit is beneath, for between the two lies the paradox of a united Christendom. In Athens as in Alexandria, beside the Tiber as beside the Thames, in Nagasaki as in New Orleans—Everyman, I will go with thee, and be thy guide in thy most need to go by thy side.

REVIEWS

PARABOLES ET ALLEGORIES EVANGELIQUES. By Jean Pirot. (Lethielloux, Paris, 1949; n.p.)

The author, a professor of exegesis of the Grand Séminaire of Marseilles, has here dealt very fully with the parables and allegories of the Gospels. As he points out, our Lord spoke in parables all his life; it was one of the charms of his conversation. Therefore the author treats not only of the fully developed narratives, like the Prodigal Son, but even of the images our Lord evoked in passing: that, for instance, of the wind that blows where it wills, or of the mother whose pains are forgotten in the joy of her delivery. Each, at least of the developed narratives, is dealt with at length. Its context and probable circumstances are considered. What is evidently the author's own lively translation is given, and justified where necessary. (It is interesting to notice how readily and calmly the Catholics of France produce and accept fresh translations of the Scriptures; in France there is no one authorised and familiar version.) M. Pirot takes special pains to determine the exact nature of each passage, whether parable or allegory, and the variety of each kind. He distinguishes first the simple comparison. This in its developed form is the parable. Here the terms are to be taken in their proper sense; they are to be interpreted not individually but as a whole, to drive home a single lesson. In every parable there is one principal feature or group of features that directly illustrates the reality to which attention is to be drawn. The other subordinate features serve only to bring into relief the chief point of the parable; of themselves they have no didactic but only a literary force. In an allegory, on the other hand, each feature has a didactic value of its own; it corresponds to some aspect of the reality to be illustrated. This analysis of the different types is carried a good deal further by the author; who allows also that they may sometimes exist together in a given case. There are allegorical traits in certain parables; some allegories contain features which have a literary value only. The important thing is to distinguish the different elements that occur in each story, otherwise the exegesis will lead to confusion. Such analysis is, of course, nothing new; but in this work it is set out very clearly and in full in a series of final notes. Its principles are consistently applied in the body of the book. In his exegesis the author cites the opinions of the chief earlier writers on the parables, and especially of modern French Catholics authorities such as Père Lagrange and Père Buzy (his references and bibliography will be a useful guide to the more ambitious reader). The patristic interpretations are given due weight but their allegorising passed over briefly. His own judgments are independent, well-balanced, and as a rule convincing. His explanations in general are clear and illuminating; but there are some exceptions. For instance, the section on the Unjust Steward leaves

one almost as much in the dark as before. Sometimes he labours a point, and discusses at length a problem that could be dealt with briefly; the miniature parable addressed to Simon the Pharisee is an example, of which the explanation covers sixteen pages. The Lost Sheep has a long and needless excursus on the Shepherd in Christian art. But in spite of some imperfections, the book should be of considerable value to priests and laity able to read easy French, both in their private study of the Gospels and their teaching of others.

DOM JOHN HIGGENS.

NOUUM TESTAMENTUM DOMINI NOSTRI IESU CHRISTI LATINE *secundum editionem Sancti Hieronymi*. Partis tertiae fasciculus secundus. (Oxonii e Typographeo Clarendoniano, apud Galfridum Cumberlege, 1949; 21s.)

The production of the great critical edition of the Vulgate New Testament, whose publication was begun at Oxford in 1889 by John Wordsworth, Bishop of Salisbury and Henry Julian White, Dean of Christchurch, has been going on for over sixty years. The present fascicule consists of the text of the seven 'canonical epistles' from James to Jude, and so only the Apocalypse is to come. During these sixty years 'Wordsworth-White' (generally written simply WW) has enjoyed an undisputed position of authority on the text of the Vulgate New Testament, and is essential to the exegete for any serious work on the Latin text. WW sets out to establish the Latin text as it left St Jerome's hands, and this is found to differ slightly from the usual official text, the Clementine Vulgate of 1592. for since that time much manuscript evidence has been brought to bear upon the text. WW is a critical text in excelsis: each quarto page has about six verses of text, the rest being a really complete *apparatus criticus* giving the variant readings of all independent codices (i.e. which are not merely copies of one another) and the printed Vulgates, as well as divergences from Greek readings (with their codices indicated). In its class it is a perfect work, for if it should happen that one should disagree with the reading adopted in the text, all the evidence for any other reading is there in the apparatus.

In reproducing the text of the codices exactly the editors have not inserted any punctuation or capital letters and have retained the orthography of uncontracted forms such as 'inmaculata' and write 'uerbum', 'uultus', etc., all of which look awkward to us who read every day from a modern Latin text. But these things are familiar to all who have consulted WW through the years. And every fascicule, as it appears, has for generations been welcomed throughout the learned world.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

ZEUGNIS FÜR CHRISTUS. By Eucharius Berbuir. (Herder, Freiburg, 1949; DM.8.50.)

This book of 218 pages is an intimate study of the prologue of St John's Gospel (1, 1-18). It is the text, it would seem, of notes for the guidance of a study-circle given by a young Franciscan Father during the summer of 1946 at a German prisoner-of-war camp in France. As was done about the same time in England, a camp was set aside for theological students and priests who had been conscripted into the German army to enable them even as prisoners-of-war to continue in some way their studies. Such a camp was that at Chartres, and here Fr Berbuir, himself a prisoner-of-war, guided the theological studies of his 'Kameraden'. And this book, which bears his Provincial's *imprimatur* of 1947 but has only just appeared in print, is the result of this work. They were of course short of books of reference and the author gives in a preface a touching little bibliography of what was to hand. The absence of books compelled them to trust simply in the guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead them to 'the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God', for as the author writes, 'the Spirit searcheth all things, yea the deep things of God . . . we have received not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit that is of God: that we may know the things that are given us from God'. The method then was 'simply to try and understand and explain what was there in the text' (p. 1), a method sure to find much in a subject like St John's prologue. So they take each word (in the Greek) lovingly in turn, each phrase, each sentence, and plumb its depths as far as they are able. They are strict and not fanciful, they interpret Scripture by Scripture, and all the time they are intent on understanding the full meaning, on seeing Christ, and bringing him through the Holy Word into their own souls and so bringing him into this wrecked world—a wreckage that was physically and poignantly present to them all the time. Thus they were trying to learn how to give 'testimony of Christ' in the world—these words being adapted from the prologue to form the title of the book. The whole book is dedicated to the French priest Abbé Le Meur, who had been put in charge of the spiritual welfare of the prisoners-of-war in France, and the dedication is made in the name of all his companions. The fact of this dedication by a German ex-soldier to a French abbé is a treasure indeed. And apart from the value of its intrinsic devotion, this book is a lovely memorial to the piety of the Catholic German soldiers, which those of us who worked among them came to know so well.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

ON ENGLISHING THE BIBLE. By Ronald A. Knox. (Burns Oates and Washbourne; 6s.)

In course of the years spent in producing his translation of the Old and New Testaments Mgr Knox published a number of articles

dealing with his work of translation, chiefly in *The Clergy Review*. The most important of these were 'Some Reasons Why' in 1945 at the time of the publication of the definitive edition of the New Testament, and 'Farewell to Machabees' in 1948 at the conclusion of the work on the Old Testament but before its publication. These are among the essays (eight in all) republished in the present volume. Of the other essays some were written while the work was in progress being prompted by problems that arose as he came to them. There is the essay on biblical translation originally read to the Higher Studies Conference at Upholland and hitherto never printed in its entirety but now published under the title 'Thoughts on Bible Translation'; others reprinted here are on problems dealing with particular words and phrases as in the *Clergy Review* articles 'Some New Testament Problems' and 'Justice and Scandal in the Gospels'. 'Some Reasons Why' is a *locus classicus* and an apologia for many renderings in the New Testament, prompted by the criticisms of a friend, and including many very important principles which guided Mgr Knox in the course of his work. The corresponding *locus classicus* with regard to the very different problem of Old Testament translation is 'Farewell to Machabees'. This last is hardly an apologia or defence since not only was it written before the Old Testament was published but so far there has not been anything noteworthy in the way of reasoned attack upon his work. There was, however, an important attack on Mgr Knox's Psalms which appeared separately in 1947. The rendering was criticised by Dr Bird in the *Tablet* and Mgr Knox made a spirited defence in a *Clergy Review* article entitled 'Morsu Amarissimo' (being a reference to the birds in the Canticle of Moses). This is reprinted in the present book. There is also a short sketch originally contributed to a memorial volume on Bishop Challoner in 1946 entitled 'Challoner and the Douay Version'. The most recent of all these essays is that here entitled 'Nine Years Hard', which is the text of a talk broadcast on Radio Eireann early this year (1949) which outlines the whole task.

Mgr Knox's own translation of the Bible is, very naturally, frequently and often keenly discussed, and it is right that he should have in this way provided us with an exposition of his principles and an apologia of his methods. Very many of the biblical translators of the past (including St Jerome himself) did so. St Jerome's remarks on the subject are scattered in his letters, and Mgr Knox's were scattered about the pages (principally) of the *Clergy Review*. An article in an ephemerides easily escapes our notice and after the passage of a year or two it becomes laborious even to search through the indices. One is therefore grateful to have these articles collected in a single book. The *loci classici* of 1945 and 1948 are important as permanent memorials to Mgr Knox's methods. Some of the other articles are of ephemeral value though they are always worth reading, especially if one had not come across them before.

One wonders whether the second volume of the Old Testament, containing the prophetical and poetical books of the Old Testament, will not perhaps call forth some interesting criticisms and so perhaps in return some equally interesting rejoinders. In that case the present volume has been issued too soon, but at the same time its appearance now is welcome.

Unless one happens to know the course of the history of the production of the Knox Bible, as outlined at the beginning of this review, or happens to have read these articles when they first came out, one is perhaps a little lost in this collection where the essays are undated and the immediate circumstances of writing not always instantly obvious from internal evidence. There is one personal detail that comes through almost every page and that is Mgr Knox's great love of the Holy Word of God and his joy in his task of translating it. This very impression for its own sake gives a special value to the book. On the first page he speaks of 'the ideas which have been simmering in my brain continuously these last three years; the ideas which, unless I am carefully controlled, I pour out freely in conversation. There is a great deal to be said about translating the Bible . . . and I am furiously interested in it'.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

INTRODUCTION TO THE OLD TESTAMENT. Vol. I. By Aage Bentzen. (G. E. C. Gads, Copenhagen, 1948; Geoffrey Cumberlege, O.U.P.; 25s.)

The author is Professor of Theology at the University of Copenhagen and published his book in Danish in 1941. He himself translated it into English and it has been printed and published in Denmark. The style is somewhat germanic, occasionally peculiar but always intelligible, and the general material, treatment, lay-out and typography are reminiscent of the older German 'Einleitungen'. The book is written with elaborate apparatus of scholarship and footnote documentation; and is a mine of useful information. The thesis emerges at the outset in the course of an interesting study of the history of Old Testament criticism: the author is going to continue the line of 'Formgeschichte' inaugurated in 1906 by Hermann Gunkel, whose method is 'not analytical-critical "Introduction" but synthetical-creative "literary history"' (p. 14). This history of the literary forms, with its discernment of 'Gattungen' or categories of literature, together with an examination of their connection with life and worship among the various peoples of the ancient East, succeeded with Gunkel to the older scheme of the 'critical introduction', which reached its highest point in the work of Wellhausen (1878) and S. R. Driver (1891). The second part of Professor Bentzen's book consists of a methodical examination of the various forms. It is these pages that are the working out of the main thesis.

The first hundred pages, after the introductory 20-page history of criticism, are occupied with an orderly tabulation of the facts concerned with the determination of the Canon of the Old Testament, the Hebrew text, and the early versions, including in the latter section a noteworthy account of the recent (1941) theories about the LXX version propounded by Prof. Kahle. All these sections are packed with useful facts, dates, etc. Reference is however difficult since there is no index and the Danish printer uses no running heads to the pages. The contents-page, at the back, is however very analytical.

Of course the author is not a Catholic, and there seems to be a consistent exclusion of reference to Catholic work. The absence of an index makes it impossible to check this entirely, but the fact that 'RB' does not come into the list of abbreviations supports the impression received while reading and glancing at the footnotes. The aforementioned introduction obviously intends to arrive quickly at the point in history where the older criticism gives way to the new literary history, and the patristic and medieval periods are dismissed in half a page. But when we come to the contemporary scene we find this amusing paragraph: 'The whole world is working together now. Even Roman Catholic theology, which from the beginning of the twentieth century is so severely tied up through the institution of the Papal Bible Commission, is sharing in the discussion in spite of all restrictions and reservations.' These words bear out the impression that the professor has not troubled to consult Catholic authors, or even to see what Pius XII said in *Divino afflante Spiritu* (par. 39-40, C.T.S. ed.) in 1943 about the special importance of the line of study which in this book he is advocating. Sometimes the footnotes are to secondary sources, and the bibliographies are not all they might be. The section on the Vulgate, apart from the oddity of referring to St Jerome as 'the learned, and not very amiable, Father', has a weak passage on the history of the printed text, it being stated that the Clementine text of 1592 superseded the Sixtine of 1590 because of 'the Jesuits and their influence'—which hardly represents the scholarly labours of Cardinal Toletus.

SEBASTIAN BULLOUGH, O.P.

DRAW NEAR TO GOD. By D. H. Southgate. (Oxford University Press; 6s.)

The meditations set out in this book are suitable for all who wish to draw near to God by prayer. They are chosen with great taste and reflect the author's experience as a missionary. Thoughts are given for the greater feasts of the year and for all the needs and circumstances of the Christian life. The method suggested for the use of the meditations may at first sight appear elaborate but will be found in practice to be quite simple. The idea of joining with others, either in spirit or in actual fact, is very praiseworthy.

F.M.K.

THE STORY OF KNOCK. By Daniel O'Keeffe. (Mercier Press; 3s.6d.)

The increasing popularity of Knock as a shrine of our Lady has prompted yet another author to give the story of the apparitions which took place there seventy years ago. Mr O'Keeffe has succeeded in his endeavour to bring out the significance of these apparitions, though in doing so he has covered much ground that is familiar and perhaps a little tedious. *The Story of Knock* is a clear and simple account of those factors which have made the shrine one of the great centres of devotion to our Lady.

F.M.K.

MARY, THE BLESSED, THE BELOVED. By Timothy Harris. (Clonmore and Reynolds, Dublin; 7s.6d.)

Our Lady, as she appears in the liturgy of the Church, is the subject-matter of this book. The author aims at a better understanding of those events in our Lady's life which are commemorated in many of the great feasts of the year. He explains at some length the significance of the titles which tradition has conferred on Mary, the Mother of God. The style is remarkably good and the finished work is something that is at once doctrinal and devotional. Preachers, no less than the laity, will welcome it and find it of great value.

F.M.K.

BECAUSE YOU BELONG TO CHRIST. Six Broadcast Services. By Fr Gordon Albion. (Arundel Press; 3s.)

A broadcast Catholic service has to be of use for Catholics, for non-Catholic Christians of eclectic habits, and for stray unbelievers who have tuned in by accident or design and who would switch off if the broadcast showed any signs of agreeing with their preconceived ideas of what religious services are like. Fr Gordon Albion has come as near as anyone to fulfilling these three requirements. In language simple and dignified he speaks of the nature of belief, of prayer, of sin, of Christian charity and forgiveness. His own words are interspersed and illustrated by quotations from the Scriptures, from well-known prayers and hymns and from some undeservedly little-known sources (pp. 32 and 32-4 in particular). One wishes that he had been able to devote more time to the Eucharist, always a difficult subject to talk about to mixed audiences. The book is to be recommended for devotional purposes and will be very useful to those who have to expound the Faith, whether from the pulpit, in the class-room or to converts under instruction.

RICHARD BLUNDELL, S.J.

THE LAWS OF HOLY MASS. The General Rubrics etc. of the Roman Missal, translated into English by Joseph Francis (a priest of the diocese of Westminster). (Burns Oates; 7s.6d.)

The rubrics at the beginning of the Missal are usually thought of as an illegible mass of print in crabbed Latin. Yet they are a principal source of ceremonial law and the closer we stick to them,

the better. This book is a translation of the rubrics and other material (the sacred mathematics of the Calendar) found at the beginning of the Missal. The translation is good workman-like English and so far as we have tested it, accurate. The print is clear and the arrangement good. We hope it will introduce many students and priests to the arid but necessary study of rubrical law. The price is a little high for students.

J.D.C.

THE PRIEST'S PRAYER BOOK. Second Edition. By Christopher Wilmot, S.J. (Burns Oates; 12s.6d.)

A second and very much expanded edition of a little book of meditations for priests on the psalms for Sundays and festivals, published some years ago. The changes and additions are: the New Latin Psalter, the Hymns of the little Hours, with metrical and prose translations, and meditations, sometimes quite lengthy, on them.

The earlier edition was marked by its good sense and an intimate understanding of the priestly life. These marks remain, reinforced by the wider scope of the subjects treated. Perhaps the meditations have little relevance to their contexts and it would be a mistake to think this is a book about the Breviary and how to 'pray' it better. No matter. For what it is, it is a good and useful book which any priest will be the better for using. Incidentally, we are happy to be able to say for once that this is *not* a book for the laity, especially not for the pious nosey-parkers who read books like this to see how far their parish priest falls short of the accepted standards of clerical piety.

J.D.C.

DIE LEHRE VOM CHRISTLICHEN VOLLKOMMENHEITSSTREBEN. By Carl Feckes. (Herder, Freiburg; DM.14.50)

This very full and detailed study of Christian perfection written by a well-known German dogmatic theologian is intended mainly for seminary students. It will be particularly welcomed as a text-book of ascetical and mystical theology in a country where it has been so difficult for many years to publish books of this nature.

E.Q.

TANGO-TONGA. By Fr Ferdinand Valentine, O.P. (Bloomsbury Publishing Co. Ltd.)

This not very original children's story of the 'jungle folk'—Peggy the Python, Jerry the Giraffe, etc.—is only unusual inasmuch as it is given a religious tinge. The author even goes so far as to make rabbits pray to Our Lady. This seems a questionable way of inducing piety in the young, but the author, a learned Dominican, undoubtedly knows best.

S.M.F.

EXTRACTS

THE LIGHT OF CONTEMPLATION in the nights of the soul provides Father K. Truhlar, S.J., with an interesting theme in *Nouvelle Revue Theologique* (December). He is anxious to show that the function of this special light is not merely purifying, as many authors seem to suggest, but also to illumine and inflame the soul's faculties and to reveal whatever may be in the soul. Even in the 'dark nights' this contemplative gift continues to exercise these positive activities in the soul, and this explains the various phenomena which sometimes accompany infused contemplation. The study is based entirely on St John of the Cross.

Purification is only a consequence of the superior knowledge and love (of contemplation) and of the disclosure of the souls imperfections, in short a *secondary* function of the light of contemplation. St John of the Cross asks 'why the light of contemplation which is so salutary and good for the soul yet produces in the soul, as it penetrates it, effects so painful?' And he answers: 'The cause is not to be found on the part of contemplation or of the divine infusion, which can only produce sweetness and delight, but in the weakness and imperfection of the soul.'

It is always refreshing to have the positive aspects of the spiritual life and particularly of contemplation set before us, for too often we reduce as much as we can of the life of the Christian, the life of prayer, to a negative formula. The author assures us that even in souls who have imperfections yet to be purified the light of contemplation can bring delight rather than bitterness, revealing sometimes the indwelling presence of the blessed Trinity rather than the presence of the imperfections. And even in the 'dark night' God remains Light and Love. We can find in *The Month* for December a new translation of St John of the Cross's poem of the Living Flame which makes that obscure verse more intelligible and very applicable to Fr Truhlar's thesis:

Oh lamps of fiery blaze
 To whose refulgent fuel
 The deepest caverns of my soul grow bright,
 Late blind with gloom and haze,
 But in the strange renewal
 Giving to the belov'd both heat and light.

The translation is by Roy Campbell.

* * * *

SIMPLICITY is the characteristic of this objective and positive approach to the life of the soul, and *La Revue Nouvelle* devotes several articles of its December number to showing how this attribute is brought to us by the birth of Christ. Christmas is the feast of

Christian simplicity. For the birth of Jesus is the birth of the man of truth. 'Jesus is a *true* man. His whole being, his whole life breathes and radiates "limpidity", shining cleanness, purity, clarity, truth and simplicity.' And it is derived from his objective spirit. Turned to God and to neighbour, as Jesus on earth always is, the soul becomes simple because she gathers all the strands of her life and sets them in order towards the One.

We shall ourselves also come to be simple and direct in our lives and our behaviour if we fix our attention on none other than God and our neighbour. But we are riveted to our own ego, and this interferes in everything we do and pollutes its source with complex, interested and egotistic motives which disturb our best actions.

This simple state of mind comes only after a long ascent, during which we must keep our gaze constantly fixed on the End; and it means, secondarily again, detachment from any sort of praise or honour that the world can give. Simplicity derives from truth, living in truth, as another contributor indicates; and living in truth means having nothing to conceal. Open-heartedness comes from this seeking of the Truth, and it begets the open character.

The autumn number of *Rivista di Vita Spirituale* (Rome) adds point to the simplicity of the Christmas feast by presenting a symposium on *holiness* or *sanctity* as the purpose of the Holy Year which otherwise would seem to remain negative in its suggestion of remission of sin and amendment of life. Again it is the objective attitude of true spirituality which provides the healthy way to simplicity and holiness. The *Rivista* begins by quoting the Bull proclaiming the Holy Year.

The great Jubilee which will be celebrated next year in the gentle city of Rome is designed in particular to call all christian men not only to expiate their sins and to amend their lives, but also to tend towards virtue and towards sanctity.

The Holy Year with its ceremonies and crowds may seem anything but simple, but it proclaims in its very title the holiness to which all must aspire. Padre Gabriele di S. Maria Magdalene shows that this sanctity which is of necessity open to all Christians has been too exclusively allied to the idea of heroism—heroic virtue—because the 'ordinary man' does not seem to come upon occasions for true heroism. To make room for the ordinary man Fr Gabriel expands a definition of sanctity drawn up by Pope Benedict XV at a canonisation in 1916.

Sanctity consists strictly speaking only in conformity to the divine will shown in a continuous and exact fulfilment of the duties of one's proper state of life.

This might seem at first sight to omit the essential element of the union of love, but the author expounds the definition primarily in terms of the duty to love God with one's whole heart, one's whole soul and with all one's powers. Almost inevitably on such a topic we are given an article by the same author on St Teresa of Lisieux, but this is a scientific research into the original MSS. and photographs of the saint which are often said to have been 'touched up' by pious editresses. The tendency has always been to make the holiness of faithful love seem soft and sentimental, which it never is and which was decidedly lacking in the life of the Saint of Lisieux. The author went to Lisieux and examined all the MSS. and photographs and shows with examples that nothing of importance was changed by any sister after the Saint's death.

* * * *

THE LAYBROTHER AND LAYSISTER are sometimes said to be an outmoded vocation. Certainly in a great number of religious orders the modern dearth of vocations to this life which is in many ways inevitably heroic and destined very immediately to holiness has constituted a very real crisis. It is not surprising then that the editors of *La Vie Spirituelle*, always so alive to the needs of modern religious, should devote a whole number of the *Supplément* (15th November) to this matter. As usual it is the result of an 'enquête' and a 'questionnaire' so that the facts and views come from nearly a hundred different religious superiors throughout France. The crisis does not seem to be at all acute in the great contemplative abbeys and priories, where they seem to have a third, a half and, with the Carthusians, even equal numbers of lay brothers to choir monks. Is there any significance in the fact that while the Dominicans of the Lyons province have one lay brother to every six choir brethren the Paris province has only one to fifteen? Certainly the greatest shortage is found among the missionaries.

Père Bonduelle, O.P., who has had experience in training lay-brothers, gives a vivid description of the problems of the common life between fathers and brothers and in particular the question of communal prayer, since the brothers are usually by rule excluded from the choral recitation of the divine office. He goes a long way towards establishing the true solution of those difficulties by defining the lay brother as 'A contemplative religious, not a priest, who consecrates himself to manual work in a deep, common life with the priests, his brothers in religion'. Contemplative life and common life, these are the two principal foundations of the brother's vocation; so that it is to be expected that he finds his position more clearly marked in a strictly contemplative order. In the more active,

missionary orders he is more likely to become separated from the life of the fathers who are preoccupied each with his own particular activity, and the brother's life of prayer becomes too much of an adjunct just as the fathers find their Office a burden rather than a support. Canonically the brother as a rule is never allowed any responsibility in the major affairs of the Order and unless the life is a very common life, a shared life, between fathers and brothers this is apt to become a source of grievance, particularly in view of the modern social ideas which are part of the air he breathes.

Père Henry, O.P., contributes to the discussion an interesting historical sketch of the development of the lay brotherhood. And there are some extremely interesting notes on a Mexican attempt at a return to St Benedict's original plan in which few monks were ordained priest and the majority would have been classed today as laybrothers except that they were devoted to the choir as well as to their manual occupations. These Mexicans began like St Bernard in an isolated thicket; but there is another modern experiment described here which followed the same Rule but was founded in the midst of the dechristianised masses of France. The vocation to the lay brotherhood is evidently still full of promise and of great importance for the future. It is to be hoped that these most practical and topical editors will next devote themselves to the lay-sisters whose problems are rather different and whose future too will be different.

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ON THE STUDY WEEK-ENDS held this year at Grayshott near Hindhead, and appearing among the notices in LIFE OF THE SPIRIT, we have received the following:

More and more it is realised that when Catholic girls leave school or when young converts enter the Church, they must have opportunities provided to continue their religious education and keep their faith fresh and alive. Otherwise they very soon find themselves befogged in the pagan atmosphere in which they so often live. With this end in view Grayshott continues to organise special Study Week-ends. During the week-ends Catholic girls and women not only have the benefit of excellent lectures, but also of making contact with one another. A special feature is also the 'question box' which is provided for those who wish to have some problem discussed and explained.

The habit of study week-ends seems happily to be increasing up and down the country. They often bear more fruit than the straightforward retreat which as a rule appeals only to those already firmly established in the Church.

DOMINICAN LIFE, DOMINICAN WORK is an attractively illustrated bro-

chure introducing the life and work of the sisters of the Third Order Conventual in England. It is to be had from any Dominican convent and shows how varied and yet united the life can be.

FETES ET SAISONS (December) takes St Francis of Assisi for its theme, a subject admirably suited to the genius of its editors. St Francis appeals to so many in England, and here they will be shown the saint very much in place in Assisi and yet the saint of the day for all countries.

THE MASS—MY LIFE, the Y.C.W. pamphlet written to instruct the young workers in the central doctrine of the Mass and to be used in the religious enquiries in their meetings has been reprinted (1s., from 62 Abbey Road, S.W.9) and it is certainly worth procuring by teachers and instructors of all kinds as well as for students and workers.

EVANGELISER, which is one of the only reviews devotedly exclusively to the modern apostolate, is concerned in its November issue with the contact between priests and laity in the parish—a most vital problem in forming the foundation of the apostolate in the parish.

CULTURE CATHOLIQUE (La Colombe; September) gives 100 pages to a work of summary and synthesis on the origin of French spirituality in the sixteenth century by Louis Cognet.

BOOKS RECEIVED

Blackfriars. Gerald Vann, O.P.: The Pain of Christ, 5s.

Burns, Oates and Washbourne. T. F. Lindsay: St Benedict, 10s.6d.; Hubert van Zeller, O.S.B.: Famine of the Spirit, 7s.6d.

Gill (Dublin). M. Oliver, O.Cist.R.: Fair as the Moon, 12s.6d.; Roland Burke Savage, S.J.: Catherine McAuley, 15s.

Mercier. Henri Petitot, O.P.: Saint Bernadette, 8s.6d.

Rockliffe. Rosa Hobhouse: Mary Hughes, 6s.

Editions du Seuil. François de St Marie, O.C.D.: La Règle du Carmel et son esprit, n.p.

LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

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Binding. Orders and Enquiries for binding volumes of the review may be sent to the Kemp Hall Bindery, 33 St Aldate's, Oxford.

Devaluation. In view of the change in currency, the annual subscription to LIFE OF THE SPIRIT is now reduced to TWO DOLLARS for the United States. Annual subscriptions of three dollars received since September 31st, 1949, will be extended for a further period of six months.